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ABSTRACT

The Community College of Vermont (CCV) initiated a three-year Integrated Service Team (IST) Project to develop, test, and evaluate a model for learner needs assessment that incorporated institutional collaboration among postsecondary institutions in Vermont. Graduate student interns and faculty representatives from state and community colleges formed teams with CCV staff to plan and carry out activities in various regions of the state. Activities were developed in five broad categories: (1) assessment, e.g., student and community needs questionnaires and profiles; (2) planning, e.g., developing program objectives and criteria, recruiting instructors, and arranging for class materials and locations; (3) development and support, e.g., conducting teacher orientation and training workshops, designing teaching materials and handbooks, and assisting with course evaluation; (4) outreach, e.g., participating in community events and publicizing campus activities; and (5) staff development, e.g., instructor training and evaluation. The project report describes specific accomplishments of various IST's in these categories and in areas of instructional development, responsive education, faculty and administrative collaboration, and an intern program in which graduate students assisted the regional teams. Additionally, project impacts are examined and a model for dissemination is presented. (DR)

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ED174289

Community College of Vermont

REPORT ON THE

INTEGRATED SERVICE TEAM

PROJECT FOR THE

W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION

Submitted by:
G. Richard Eisele

March, 1979

JC 790 468

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INTRODUCTION

The contents of this report result from three years of Integrated Service Team (IST) activities and from discussions with and written reports from the participants. The Kellogg project itself has been an on-going evaluation process. This report attempts to sift through, analyze, and summarize important results, with the knowledge that some, but hopefully not too much of substance will fall through the cracks.

Many of the materials and exhibits referred to are substantial documents and therefore could not be included as appendices. For more information about these materials, please direct inquires to:

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To both those directly involved with the project and to others who contributed their efforts and their thoughts, many thanks.

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PROLOGUE

It has now been well established that adult learners are the fastest growing segment of American education. In response to this trend, the higher education community is beginning to recognize the value of serving this new clientele and many colleges and universities are moving into the market with varying degrees of commitment, preparation and enthusiasm. This new interest is also a pragmatic reaction to the fact that the 18-22 year old cohort is diminishing and will continue to do so for at least a decade. The hope (well expressed by the Carnegie Commission in its 1976 report) is that the addition of "nontraditional" students will fill the gap.

Informed educators now realize that the simple extension of traditional forms of education to more age groups and to a more diverse set of learning needs will often fall short of being an adequate response. Acknowledging this, some institutions have developed innovative approaches designed to meet the needs of new students. Contract learning, off-campus centers, assessment of experiential learning and external degrees are just a few. One of the dangers is the tendency to plunge into these rather exciting concepts and not come up to see what is happening. Those of us serving nontraditional students with nontraditional programs have a responsibility to continually ask, "are we meeting students needs?," "are we providing the necessary support?," and "are we applying standards to ourselves that are at least as rigorous as those more traditional programs espouse?"

It is this kind of self examination that both led the Community College of Vermont (CCV) to approach the Kellogg Foundation and increased as a result of the project.

THE SETTING

Established in 1970, CCV is a member of the Vermont State Colleges (VSC) system and fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The College enables Vermonters to continue their education locally, learning with instructors who often live in the same community, practicing the skills that they teach. The College is open to any resident of the state regardless of age, location or previous educational background. CCV gears its services especially to people who, in the past, have been discouraged by high tuition, distance from campuses, family and job responsibilities, poor previous education experiences, and limiting admissions policies.

To accomplish its mission, the College has developed and implemented a model system that has gained broad recognition. By successfully providing links between learner needs and available resources, by effectively using community talent and facilities, CCV is able to provide convenient, low cost, quality education.

At CCV, it is common to find a secretary teaching office skills, a craft person sharing his/her art, a lawyer teaching law, or a university professor teaching "History Through Literature." Learning experiences are held in local schools, office buildings, churches, and other community buildings.

A degree program is offered in which students develop individualized study plans addressing ten broad areas of competence. Each student works with a trained counselor/instructor and other students to draw up a "contract" in which goals are set and competence identified appropriate to the established goals. A Local Review Committee made up of a student, an expert practitioner, an instructor, and a CCV staff member works closely with the student and counselor to guide and validate

the learning contract.

In order to fully understand the nature of the project and its results, there are some other distinctive features of the College that need clarification:

Logistics: First, the College is divided into four regions covering over half the state of Vermont. Because of the large geographic spread and lack of heavy population concentrations, each region is divided into smaller local offices, providing direct service to students. There are 15 of these "centers" in all. There is also a central office which provides coordination and control of the business, academic and registrarial functions.

Curriculum Development: Another important feature is the way curriculum is developed. In most traditional programs, curriculum design begins with the faculty. Within each discipline, requirements are determined and an appropriate sequence of courses is established. Students then, based on field of interest, select from among courses and programs offered. In essence, students are sorted and arranged within a pre-determined set of courses and sequence of activities. This is a perfectly workable model for an institution serving younger students on a college campus. Serving mostly part-time adult students who have an incredibly diverse range of immediate needs and purposes, CCV's curriculum planning is based on community needs assessment. It requires maximum flexibility in order to be responsive to learner needs. The curriculum is "re-created" three times a year using the results of both formal and informal needs assessments. Rather than "arranging" the students within the curriculum, the curriculum is organized in response to students and community. Qualified community experts who relate well

to adult learners are then recruited, selected and trained to teach the courses and other learning experiences on a part-time basis. Delivery models other than courses include independent study, work experience, clusters (support groups established to assess needs and explore educational options) and experiential learning. Just prior to the IST project, an Individualized Education Task Force (IETF) was formed to define each model, establish and test consistent procedures, and evaluate their effectiveness.

The Problems and a Solution

As a result of the self-reflection mentioned earlier, a working group of College and campus-based staff identified three interrelated problems; 1. Incomplete or inadequate needs assessment leading to low teaching effectiveness, 2. Lack of resources to solve the assessment effectiveness problems, and, 3. Lack of training sites for campus-based students interested in new educational roles.

Needs Assessment: In the area of assessment, we were having some success finding out what students wanted to learn and arranging learning experiences to meet those needs. We were helping degree students to assess and define prior learning and determine future learning needs. However, the College was not doing a complete job of helping students and teachers to assess such things as how adults learn, needs for independence, their current goals and levels of knowledge, and verbal and oral skill levels. This deficiency in turn was placing a strain on instructors. The need was clearly to improve our ability to help students and teachers begin their experiences with more and better assessment information. In essence, the effectiveness of teaching-learning process depends to some degree on our ability to assess learner needs.

Resources: Once this problem was identified, the next step was to find a workable solution. This led to the realization that the College did not have the resources either professional or material to solve the problems. The University of Vermont and the VSC might be able to help but no history of, or model for institutional collaboration existed.

Available Placements: At the same time, the campus colleges saw a need for graduate student placements in new and emerging educational roles. Faculty at the campus colleges also lacked access to these new roles and settings which could be used as forums for their development and renewal.

A Solution: A rather unique design was created to solve these problems. Basically, it was a model using a collaborative mechanism to focus on a teaching/learning issue. It would provide the additional resources needed at CCV, placements for campus interns, and it would be the first step toward state wide collaboration between institutions.

Interns and faculty representatives from the University of Vermont, Antioch New England, Lyndon, Johnson and Castleton State Colleges would form teams with CCV staff at each region to work on the learner assessment-teaching effectiveness problem.

The campus colleges at Castleton, Johnson, and Lyndon provide common curriculums in the Liberal Arts, and a variety of distinctive career programs leading to an Associate or Baccalaureate degree. The Colleges also offer graduate programs leading to the Masters of Arts in Education.

The University of Vermont, located in Burlington, is a comprehensive state university that includes ten academic schools and colleges. Graduate programs are offered in numerous disciplines including several options within the field of education.

Antioch New England located in Keene, New Hampshire, is affiliated with the Antioch Graduate School of Education. Its non-campus-based programs are designed to combine both academic and professional experience.

A centrally located director would coordinate regional efforts and a project Forum would periodically convene to discuss issues and solve problems.

In late 1975, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, provided funds for this "Integrated Service Team (IST) Project."

THE PROJECT

The narrative section of this report will restate the original objectives, show the evolution of the project focus over the course of time, describe the specific activities conducted, accomplishments both planned and unplanned gained, and evaluate the impacts of these developments on the College. Also, the report will reflect on the collaborative aspects of the project, and discuss implications for the future. Influences the project might have on other programs in post-secondary education and some alternative strategies for dissemination will be proposed in the last section.

Evolution of the Program Focus

Every belief is a limit to
be examined and transcended.

John C. Lilly
Center of the Cyclone

Goals and Objectives: The original proposal was written in narrative form clearly outlining the "purposes" or goals of the project which are restated here:

1. develop, field test, and evaluate a model for the assessment of learner needs and the development of effective teaching to meet those needs at the Community College of Vermont;
2. develop, field test, and evaluate a model for institutional collaboration at administrative as well as service delivery levels in order to carry the project forward;
3. generate a series of "next steps" toward our goal of a statewide, collaborative network.

These goals were developed in response to the problems and needs mentioned earlier in this report. Activities were designed to accomplish the goals but observable, operationalized objectives were not included as such. In fact, the word "objective" does not appear in the text of the proposal. Based on information from interns, staff and faculty, we probably erred in the beginning by not taking the concepts in the proposal and operationalizing or "defuzzifying" them. In other words, we never translated goals into specific, observable outcomes and designed activities to produce those results. Each regional IST could have then selected those activities most appropriate for their needs.

Planning: As it happened, each team developed plans based on *their* perceived needs, trying to make them fit within the broad project goals (i.e., lack of good teacher support materials led to development of a teacher handbook). Frankly, this may have been a mistake, but on reflection, formal planning procedures did not fit well with the "free flowing" style of the College and its staff back in 1975, and many participants preferred a more self-directed flexible approach. We sincerely believe that this did not compromise the end result but did expand time frames and served to intensify the struggle over the fit between existing needs and interpretation of proposal demands.

Confusion: Much of the struggle resulted from trying to determine the nature of this "model" for learner assessment and teacher effectiveness. What would it look like, especially when the proposal talked about "questioning inventories for each part of the model," and "developing different ways for people to ask these questions?" What would we be asking? Who would be doing the asking? Who would we be asking, just

degree students or all students including single course takers?

Confusing the issue further was the abundance of diverse perceptions and assumptions around the term, "assessment." For many, assessment was synonymous with testing and for others "learner assessment" was interpreted to mean "*learning assessment*" or the assessment of what the student knows or has learned. The larger concept, as touched on in the proposal, included not only what you know as a learner but, what you are "like" vis a vis the learning process. Do you learn best visually or through listening and dialogue? Do you prefer concrete experience or abstract reasoning? What beliefs and values do you approach the learning situation with? What are your immediate and long range goals?

If this "learner assessment" is the main business of the proposal, who is going to work with the learners; staff? teachers? If it is staff, the students must be degree students only and counselors work with them, not the teacher supporters attached to the project. If it is teachers, can we train them to do meaningful assessments? If we do, chances are fairly good that they won't be around to use those skills in the next semester. To put a lot of effort into training a community instructor to be a good assessor of learners and then not have him teach again just did not make sense. Clearly developing was a complicated problem overlay on a very complex organization. There was never any question about the learner assessment-teacher effectiveness focus, it was the specifics of the "hows" that caused the dissonance.

Resolution: Given some understanding of *who* our teachers and students are, and given the lack of a consistent and enduring relationship between the two, we began to realize that the greatest impact would come from the development of those program aspects with some permanence:

our staff, our procedures, our information base, and our materials. In essence, we should improve *our ability* to provide our students and teachers with the best tools, information and support possible. Strong staff and improved resources are essential ingredients for a system serving part-time students with part-time faculty. You can't just put "non-teachers" and "non-students" together in a room and expect that good things will always happen. That's why we need fully developed and refined support mechanisms. Our ability to select, orient, train, and provide human and resource support for teachers and our ability to counsel students are the elements that promote consistent quality of the teaching-learning process. Although this seems rather elementary, I do not think that this was fully or clearly understood by ourselves or by others looking in. We instinctively knew this, but had trouble seeing its importance at the time and in relation to the project. However, it does seem clear now that this developing understanding was the driving force behind the evolution of the project.

In practice, each regional team selected an aspect of their program most in need of improvement. Projects and activities were designed and implemented to impact on those needs. Some of the earlier tensions began to dissipate as people worked on concrete tasks. However, there continued to be some uneasiness over whether the individual projects were in conformity with the proposal.

The development of self-reliant learners; people who were proficient in self-<u>assessment</u>, <u>planning</u> a learning program, <u>implementing</u> the program, and <u>evaluating</u> the results (APIE), has been established as an important educational philosophy of the College. Through intensified reflection and dialogue, both made necessary and to a large degree possible by the IST project, we strengthened our understanding

of the philosophy and began to develop interfaces between the philosophy and how we support it organizationally (Forum Report, Exhibit A, p.2). Just as self-reliant learners need the APIE skills, so must the College be proficient in assessing learner needs, planning curriculum and programs, implementing those designs, and evaluating their effectiveness. Ultimately, improvement of learner assessment-teaching effectiveness depends on the strengthening of the whole APIE cycle, and the individual IST projects taken collectively would do just that. Having this framework helped us to see how it all made sense. The project focus had moved from a concentration on developing questioning inventories and assessment techniques to invigorating and reinforcing our ability to support the teaching-learning process as a whole. The APIE concept provided a cementing framework, bonding individual efforts together.

Activities

This section of the report will attempt to describe the range of activities, the actual tasks performed by the teams. Then it will highlight specific developments and achievements. An ensuing discussion will describe the consolidation and integration of the achievements into CCV's total effort.

To make some sense and order out of the myriad activities performed and reported by ISTs, they will be grouped in categories. However, it should be remembered that categories are not discrete and many activities fulfill more than one function.

Assessment: The first category includes those activities that are directed toward getting good information about and developing better understandings of learners, instructors and community, such as:

- developing and using needs assessment questionnaires, and survey guides designed for direct contact with individuals and groups of *students;*
- researching, designing and testing both survey and interview methods for assessing *community* needs;
- developing, designing, and testing of instruments and techniques for measuring preferences and styles of students and instructors in classes;
- developing ways to help teachers ask good assessment questions before negotiating objectives;
- testing with several different student groups a commercially available instrument, the Learning Style Inventory;
- developing student profiles from assessment information;
- retrieving and reviewing student and teacher evaluations for strengths and weaknesses;
- researching, collecting, and revising assessment questions and tools from within and from outside the College.

Planning: The second category has to do with planning programs to meet assessed needs:

- developing program objectives;
- interviewing and making initial contacts with instructors;
- developing criteria for the selection of courses;
- recruiting and selecting instructors by phone, mail and personal contact;
- negotiating with teachers about content, length of course, settings, dates, etc.;
- setting up and arranging class meeting places, facilities, times, dates and additional materials;

- participating in regional and all college planning meetings;
- development of and participation in curriculum advisory meetings;
- planning and developing "short-term" and special learning experiences and community service events;
- planning, designing and writing course list information;
- developing procedures for keeping track of all the tasks necessary for good course development;
- developing materials and programs for students with special needs that could not be met through courses or independents;
- gathering information on other community learning opportunities.

Development and Support: The third category includes those activities necessary to establish, support and facilitate good teaching-learning environments:

- assisting teachers with the construction and negotiation of learning objectives and end of course evaluations;
- developing and leading orientation and workshop sessions for instructors;
- monitoring work experiences and independent studies;
- developing and testing teacher packet and handbook materials;
- setting up, attending, and facilitating learning support groups;
- identifying good uses for video equipment and training instructors in their use;
- visiting classes, making observations, and developing classroom observation guidelines;
- developing refined independent study and practicum procedures and guidelines;
- assisting teachers with mid-term evaluations and providing help with teaching techniques;

- participating in and leading degree planning classes;
- following up on attendance records, contacting chronically absent students;
- doing mid-term spot checks on classes;
- referring students to other community agencies;
- developing and refining evaluation forms for courses and instruction;
- locating and distributing resource material and audiovisual equipment;
- evaluating the effectiveness of support services.

Outreach: This category embraces those activities designed to communicate our philosophy and programs to the community and others:

- visiting and interviewing community, agency, and business leaders;
- participating in community events--home shows, etc.;
- interviewing campus faculty and relating the role of CCV to campus communities;
- participation in radio and TV talk shows for publicity;
- working with instructors to increase their understanding of and commitment to the philosophy and the job;
- writing, producing and distributing student and teacher newsletters;
- designing, writing and distributing brochures and posters.

Staff Development: The fifth group of activities includes professional, staff development and all-college participation:

- researching teaching effectiveness and adult development literature;

- visiting other regional offices and sharing professional ideas, experiences and concerns with other staff;
- participating in courses, workshops, conferences and other available events;
- serving and working on all-college task forces and committees, developing learning and teaching support methods, handbooks, manuals and materials.

Other Activities: The following activities were also performed:

- counseling students in the areas of financial aid, career and academic planning;
- developing and maintaining correspondence logs and other office records;
- teaching CCV courses and supervising independent studies;
- attending regional, all-college, IST, and Intern meetings;
- filing, typing, collating, putting together packets, covering the office and other general office tasks;
- helping with registration;
- development of and participation in summer residency programs;
- developing an "Intern Orientation Handbook" (Exhibit G);
- keeping activity and journal logs;
- participating on Local Review Committees;
- responding to crisis situations, class locked out of building, etc.

This conglomerate of activities, in a sense, describes the new job role discussed in the proposal. It at least partially describes what people, who deliver competence based education to a community, using community resources, do.

Accomplishments/Assessment

Basically, this section of the report will outline and briefly discuss developments that have occurred as a result of the project's activities and resources. The discussion will include an examination of the symbiotic relationships among developments and their final consolidation into College-wide products and procedures.

Community Needs Assessment: As previously mentioned, community needs assessment is the foundation, the sine qua non, of our curriculum development efforts. It is the process from which all subsequent activities emerge. "Identification of needs is the connecting link between the problems of people and the services of an institution" (Needs Assessment Report, Exhibit C). We have used man-on-the-street interviews, mailed questionnaires, agency contacts, and a host of other procedures. Our problem was that the process had never been systematically researched, planned, implemented and evaluated. Rarely was anything ever written down or regularly shared about what was being done. We only had a vague sense of what worked, what didn't work and what circumstances required which approach.

To correct this, a comprehensive needs assessment methodology was researched, designed, tested and evaluated (Exhibit C). Data was collected from previous local needs assessment efforts, criteria were set for choosing among available techniques, informational outcomes were pre-planned, and techniques were chosen that were consistent with criteria; resource and budget limitations. A three pronged approach was designed: 1. Survey research, 2. Individual interviews and 3. Group discussions. Target populations were defined and the process was implemented.

To get the full flavor of this project, it is necessary to read the report. However, some important results deserve special attention

and can be summarized briefly:

- Because the project systematically tested a variety of assessment formats, was designed to be implemented without extensive additional resources, and was written up in report form, it is serving as a model for future College efforts.
- The project used a community instructor to supplement regular staff in the interview process. His excellent report reflects the potential value of community instructors as resources for developmental efforts of the College.
- Although designed primarily as a needs assessment effort, the results highlight its potential both as a publicity and an outreach tool. Information flows in both directions as needs are assessed.
- Although the data revealed few surprises, it serves as good baseline information from which questions can be designed to gather further, more refined knowledge.

Adaptations of the needs assessment project have already been tried in other areas. Using the Brattleboro design as a starting point, the College has designed questionnaires and interviewing procedures for service providers, employers and consumers. Also, in a separate effort, a collaborative needs assessment (CCV and Lyndon State College) interview guide and process was designed and used with personnel directors of various companies and agencies.

Learner Assessment: Earlier in this report we discussed the difficulty of defining the nature and boundaries of this rather elusive topic. Resulting from the Forum, its subsequent report (Exhibit A), a consultant-prepared report on Assessment of Learning (Exhibit B),

and a great deal of discussion around learner assessment, we now have a working definition. It is "the on-going means whereby student's attitudes, skills, styles, knowledge and needs are examined for the purpose of attaining an educational goal." For the student it leads to enhanced self-awareness and serves to "Link the world of the student to the world of the helper by creating an area of common understanding." In essence, it is a mutual examination, appraisal, and diagnosis. Armed with increased information, students can make better choices among learning opportunities and establish learning objectives from a position of increased self-awareness. It should occur both before a student selects a program and early in each learning experience before objectives are finalized. Ideally, periodic re-assessment then occurs throughout the learning process and in a sense becomes a formative evaluation procedure.

With this in mind, several different approaches were taken to the problem: We researched and collected models, ideas, and techniques in use both within and outside of the College. We read everything we could get our hands on. We were fascinated by the possible implications of what we might learn from the expanding adult development field, and arranged for a full course to be held at the College. The picture began to take shape; we were on new ground with few tracks to follow. Outside of prior learning, values clarification, and career planning assessments, there was little that seemed readily available to adult, part-time students working with community instructors. Significant conceptual knowledge was plentiful; implications for practice were emerging, but concrete models were sparse. Much of the cognitive style mapping and developmental skills testing procedures seemed either too complicated or imposing for our students. Theories on intellectual and cognitive development were strongly appealing from a relevance point of view but practical

assessment procedures especially for students in classes seemed to be well in the future. Malcolm Knowles' Self Directed Learning contained some notable self-assessment strategies, and a few interesting learning style exercises were presented by Berquist and Phillips in A Handbook for Faculty Development. In general, our assessment of learner assessment gave us a good background while providing little in the way of compatible concrete models. It was clear that to meet our needs, we would have to do some creating, adapting and modifying.

The College staff, working with learning support and study plan groups, had exercises and questionning techniques to share. Also, instructors and support staff were developing procedures and exercises aimed at assessing learner needs in preparation for the process of negotiating objectives in courses, independent studies and work experience. These were collected and, in combination with some of the more congruent ideas from the processes mentioned above, became the "core materials" for further work.

Learning Style: Partially from the adult development course, enthusiasm was high about the relevance of learning style assessment for understanding individual differences among students and for helping instructors to be aware of and accomodating to different styles. Students with self understanding could better select among alternatives and identify weak areas for improvement. Knowing that you have a concrete, divergent, learning by experience style can help you to seek opportunities (such as expository writing) requiring the development of abstract reasoning skills.

The Learning Style Inventory (LSI) was introduced at the Adult Development class and then tested in several settings throughout the College. Unlike most of the other instruments surveyed, it seemed to be

a good fit with our philosophy and with our needs. It does not place students on a hierarchical continuum and it avoids pejorative language. It is a simple instrument designed to reflect back to students their preferences for different modes of learning. Based on experiential learning theory, it measures strengths and weaknesses and the relative emphasis placed on four learning modes; concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Simply put, the inventory helps a learner understand whether he/she learns best by feeling, watching, thinking or doing.

As a result of our trials, we have now incorporated the LSI and procedures for using it into our assessment package (see Student Progress Portfolio, Exhibit D). A serendipitous finding was that when used in a class or group setting, the instrument stimulates discussion, and generates an increased awareness of the value of self-assessment. It helps to get students thinking about themselves in new ways.

Another IST, after a review of available learning style instruments, designed a classroom assessment procedure for both students and teachers. The questionnaire determines student preferences in four broad categories; people, verbal skills, objects, and mathematics; elicits information about the students' preferred modes of learning; discussion, readings, and experience; and determines feelings about in-class atmosphere and structure; independence, teacher-directed, and working with other students. The completed questionnaires become tools for helping teachers identify different student learning styles and preferences. They also help students think about and understand their own idiosyncratic relationships to the learning process. A teacher assessment form was designed for use with the student assessment. It determines preferences in the conduct of the

teacher's role. Three categories are addressed:

1. Responsibility - does the teacher place the main responsibility for learning on students, the teacher, or both? 2. Method - does the teacher prefer lecture, discussion, written material, or media as teaching method? 3. Conditions - does the teacher prefer student independence, teacher directedness, or a middle ground for optimum learning conditions?

Results were tabulated for both questionnaires and returned to the instructors for informational and class discussion purposes. The results were also synthesized with other student profile information for use in the Instructor Handbook (Exhibit E). Remember, for CCV, the greatest value of any instrument or procedure may be its usefulness as a staff resource.

Profile Information: In the aforementioned designs, the information collected was important, but the main focus was on the procedures and their usefulness as assessment tools. A somewhat different approach was taken by another IST. The focus of this effort was to gather profile information on students and teachers. The information itself was the main objective. Classes were visited and 138 students were polled under direct staff supervision. A brief summary of some interesting results follows:

> The average age was 32 years and two out of every three students are female.
>
> Almost half of the students were native born Vermonters.
>
> Most had a rich variety of work experience with relatively less educational or academic experience.

Fully 1/3 were degree students with an equal number having taken courses at other colleges.

Personal enrichment and the improvement of present job skills, not better pay, were primary reasons for educational pursuits.

Important factors for learning were: a comfortable environment, encouragement, and successful experiences. Also highly rated were "learning by doing" and a need to learn at one's own pace.

Money and time were considered major obstacles followed by personal problems at home, little self-confidence and inability to study at home.

Knowledge of subject, intelligence, and "organized" were seen as important teacher traits. Also rated as important were; "makes subject alive," provides opportunities for practice, "understanding," open to learning from students, allows some student control, a sense of humor, and "lets students learn at own pace."

After interviewing local students, one intern noted that adult learners from an economically depressed rural area often lacked awareness or sophistication about the world "out there," and were naive about or intimidated by the way institutions function. And yet, they seemed determined to make changes in their lives through education, were incredibly resilient, and were surprisingly optimistic about the future.

Assessment for Objective Setting: Developing course objectives that reflect the individual needs and differences among students, is a challenge for our instructors each term. Before a final set of objectives and instructional methods are determined, instructors and students are asked to make an assessment of needs, preferred instructional methods, obstacles to learning, prior knowledge and other pertinent topics.

Objectives are then negotiated to include the results of the assessment.

Ideas were solicited from instructors, staff and students, new methods were tested and evaluated, and some of the more workable models were identified for dissemination. These are included in the materials later to be described (Staff Manual, Instructor Handbook, Student Portfolio). Briefly, they include:

> A Negotiating Objectives questionnaire that directs students' attention toward such things as relevant past experiences, relationships between the course and present job, most desired content areas, possible special projects, relevance to degree program, preferred learning methods and possible uses for learning gained.
>
> A structured brainstorming technique where questions like; "why did you take this course?" "what do you need to know or be able to do?" and "how will you know when you have learned it?" are explored and answers to those questions recorded.
>
> A personal letter from each student to the instructor outlining expectations for the course, preferred learning modes, and perceived obstacles. This method also gives the instructor good insight into the student's skill and ease with language.

Developmental Skills: It is not uncommon for students to enroll in the degree program or in academic courses only to discover that their efforts are frustrated by a deficiency in the basic skills. In the past the College has been able to provide courses and even quickly arrange independent studies to meet some of these needs. However, we lacked a good early detection system for identifying the problems before the student suffered an often painful failing experience.

Concomitant to the IST project, a task force was working to find solutions to this problem. They had established objectives,

researched a host of instruments in use at other colleges, defined a developmental studies program from assessment through evaluation, and determined a need for an assessment package designed specifically for part-time adult students. The package would include reading, writing, study skills, and math assessments. The importance of this work for rounding out our assessment model was recognized and the extensive nature of the job obvious. As part of a later material development and consolidation process, the resources of the IST's were brought to bear on the developmental skills project. Assessment instruments in each of the four skill areas were designed, re-designed, tested, revised and re-tested. Consequently, we now have what amounts to a set of good working models. The evaluations show a need for some improvement and refinement but indicate a good foundation to build from.

Summary: The accomplishments just discussed, taken as a group, provide the basics for a good assessment model at CCV. First, they provide a prototype community needs assessment process. They provide for the assessment of many dimensions of individual differences (goals, values, needs, styles, present knowledge and skills, etc.) that are the most relevant to the students as they prepare to negotiate objectives. They are both procedures and materials and to be effective, they need to be used with care, enthusiasm and sensitivity. When combined with a careful orientation process, assessment procedures can help each learning experience begin on a solid footing.

Instructional Development

Assessment does the groundwork for good instruction. In addition,

the College has the responsibility to use every practical means to ensure a continually developing instructional program. Orientation procedures, in-service workshops, contacts with individual teachers, and the provision of resource materials provide the core for our instructional development efforts.

Orientation and in-service workshops were developed and refined by several IST's. They experimented with several different formats and topics, resulting in a further clarification of what works, what doesn't, and what future efforts are needed.

Orientation and In-service: Some orientation takes place in our initial interviews with instructors. The competence-based approach, the College philosophy, and the resultant procedures (objective setting and negotiating, narrative end of course evaluations) required by the College are discussed. However, we have learned that in-depth discussion, dialogue among peers, and other dynamics of group process are important supplements to the individual sessions. When one instructor shares with others "tips" on what to do the first night of class, ears and minds open up and real learning occurs. We have found that discussions around teaching and learning styles, characteristics of adult learners, first night of class, "difficult students," negotiating objectives, on-going evaluations, and gaining active student participation produce intense and meaningful interchange. Because these and other topics are introduced in the Instructor Handbook (Exhibit E), its use either prior to or during the workshop can serve as a stimulant to or supplemental reference for the discussion.

At the close of each training session, a recurring remark from teachers is, "We should do this more often." And yet, one of our major problems is getting teachers to come more often. In addition to their

teaching load, community instructors have job and family responsibilities that leave them little time and energy for in-service training. On occasion, we do succeed in attracting large numbers by offering dinner and combining the session with first night of registration. This allows teachers to also meet their prospective students. The problem is that with the other important agenda, only a short time is left for instructional issues. Variations on this theme are being tried with some degree of success. Eventually we may have to substitute an in-service night for one class or find a way to pay instructors a little extra for their participation. The small numbers make for good discussion, but often those instructors most in need are the ones least likely to show up. Ideally, there should be an orientation session, a mid-term workshop, periodic individual contacts, and a supplemental opportunity for instructors who need extra help with the evaluation process.

On two occasions we invited instructors and staff to participate in sessions with outside "experts" (Rick Meeth, Roger Garrison, Ed Ducharme) from related fields. Heavy staff and moderate instructor turnout was realized, but little time was left for good peer interaction among instructors.

In essence, we have tried several ideas, we know what topics to present, but we need money, staff, and time to organize settings that encourage better attendance while stimulating active discussion.

Staff and Material Development: To repeat, with an almost evanescent part-time community faculty, instructional improvement results from the development of a well-informed and trained support staff equipped with good resources. To provide these resources requires research,

planning, trial and error, evaluation and discussion which are themselves, valuable learning experiences. The IST's have, in the process of building a core set of support materials, refined their understandings and developed new skills.

For the past three years, we have experimented with instructor handbooks. This proved to be a difficult task. Not only did instructor opinions differ widely over preference for handbook content; staff opinion differed over both content and style of presentation. We learned about the pain involved in the production of materials in a complex, diverse, geographically dispersed institution. It often seemed that the only point of agreement was the need for a good handbook.

The first major attempt was "Wampum" (An early effort, later revised) which was designed to provide instructors with an evaluation handbook. The concept was later expanded to encompass the whole APIE cycle. It included some good writing, some excellent content and was spiced with many cartoons, graphics, quotations, and other embellishments. The reaction from instructors and staff was mixed but helpful. The major criticism was directed toward style not substance. Too much "pizazz," and a little too "cutesy," were common remarks. Some also felt that the language was in places condescending to instructors. It was a good try, it gave us substantial information to work with, but it just missed the mark.

Another IST developed a handbook designed to meet their local instructor needs. It was shorter, covered just the basics, and was not as garish. This was another valuable trial. In general, it was judged to be not comprehensive enough and a little too dry. However, it was another step toward what we wanted and it provided additional resource materials.

Several IST's developed teacher resource packets using both selected pieces from the handbook efforts and additional materials. These packets are given to every instructor during orientation and include the basic College information; Regional staff, telephone numbers, semester calendar, student rooster, phone chains, etc. They also include course description and narrative evaluation forms, ideas for negotiating objectives, and tips for on-going, periodic evaluations.

Teacher Selection: Good teaching at CCV depends to a large degree on our ability to choose good teachers. Because of the many earlier mentioned problems with orienting and training a part-time community faculty, it is imperative that we continually develop and improve our ability to be selective. IST's have worked to better refine our selection criteria and improve our initial interviews. Although not to be considered the ultimate list, the following criteria represent our latest thinking:

- practical and theoretical knowledge and skill in the subject area to be taught and related academic credentials;
- interpersonal communication skills relevant to working with a heterogeneous student group, and willingness to adopt teaching strategies appropriate to a variety of learning styles;
- enthusiasm about teaching the subject in CCV's learner-centered system, with appreciation of the special needs of adults who have job and family responsibilities in addition to their student obligations;
- willingness to actively involve students in the negotiation of specific course objectives, methods, content and completion requirements;
- understanding of the joint obligation of teachers and students to evaluate learning in a competence-based narrative format;
- self-reliant attitude and ability to work with some autonomy and creativity in responding to unanticipated needs and difficulties as they arise in the teaching situation.

Resumes, preliminary course proposals, professional reputations, and the initial interview all provide information pertinent to the selection criteria and process. One IST set up some structured initial interviews, analyzed the process and evaluated the results while concentrating on the development of a set of appropriate questions. A set of interviewing tips and questions were developed. The questions are not necessarily meant to be asked in a structured way or repeated verbatim by the staff member. They can be used as topical reminders and references for staff to use as the interview progresses. These questions are included in the resource package that accompanies the Staff Manual.

Problem Solving: Based on information from interviews, evaluations, questionnaires, and other sources, one IST identified some unmet instructor needs. Deficiencies included: lack of knowledge of CCV and its philosophy, problems with writing and negotiating objectives, incomplete understanding of competence-based education, difficulties with narrative evaluations, and feelings of isolation from both the College and other instructors. Objectives were formulated that would improve each deficiency. Planning and evaluation worksheets were designed for each objective that included an intervention activity, the person or persons responsible, completion date, indicators of success (evaluation criteria), and constraints. Examples of intervention activity worksheets are included in the Staff Manual resources.

Class Visits: Class visitations are an important activity for both instructional development and support. They provide staff with first hand knowledge of what is happening, and they provide teachers with a

sense of support and recognition. However, some new instructors are intimidated and even threatened by staff visits and it is best not to just drop in for a surprise call. A preliminary telephone call and discussion of purpose is essential.

One IST established a set of class visit guidelines and suggestions by carefully analyzing the process and looking for critical issues. Suggestions are made for first night as well as subsequent visitations. The report reminds staff of all the benefits from as well as the delicate nature of class visits. These guidelines are also included as a resource to the Staff Manual.

Communication: Another effort designed to improve communication with instructors has been the development of teacher newsletters. ISTs in two regions experimented with different designs and content focus. Samples of these are available in the resources attached to the Staff Manual. Instructors seem to appreciate anything that helps them to feel part of a "real college." Newsletters can serve that function and provide useful information at the same time. Whether or not they are worth the energy and expense to make them a regular and frequent part of the program is still an open question.

A modification of the newsletter idea now being discussed involves the periodic publication and distribution of a one page bulletin discussing timely issues and topics relevant to serving part-time adult learners.

Evaluation: Instructional improvement depends in part on the amount and quality of information that is collected from and about instructors each term. Narrative end of course evaluations, student evaluations of instruction and questionnaires for teachers are used to supplement

our interviews and class visits. An evaluation interview schedule was developed to be used with a sample of instructors at the end of each term. Its intent is to get in-depth information about teachers' perceptions of their recent experience. It solicits information about difficulties, pleasant surprises, student attributes and constraints, College resources and support, in-service needs, and curriculum ideas. It is available to all staff through the Staff Manual resource package.

Summary: Over the last three years we have come a long way in our ability to develop and support our part-time, community instructors. We now have the foundation materials, some good resources, tested procedures and a refined sense of what works and what does not. It would be safe to say, at this point, that getting large numbers of instructors to participate in occasional training activities, and providing enough people and in-service training to carry out the tasks we know to be effective, are our main problems.

Other Program Accomplishments

CCV is committed to providing alternatives to the classroom instructional model and to the enrichment of communities by sponsoring and participating in educational events.

Independents and Practicums: Learning that results from independent study, life or work experience can be equally as valuable as classroom learning. This strong commitment to alternative learning models carries with it an equal responsibility to do them well. ISTs from

three regions worked on the development and refinement of procedures and forms. These were designed to insure the necessary support and monitoring of each on the job or independent learning experience.

We researched how other colleges and the different CCV regions carry out independents and practicums. We developed sets of questions for students to ask themselves before making the decision whether or not to participate. Guidelines for both students and supervisors were established to help with the writing and negotiating of objectives, and a monitoring process was established and defined. The complete sequence was evaluated and suggestions for further development were discussed. These reports are also included as resources to the Staff Manual.

Home Study: On occasion students have learning needs that can be met through home study where carefully designed materials provide the instruction. Correspondence courses and pre-packaged commercial materials are available to meet some of these needs. However, we have found that often our students need a more individualized program or can not afford the sometimes expensive commercial materials.

Two Home Study Kits, a family relations package called "Under One Roof" and a Calligraphy Kit were designed, produced, tested and evaluated by one Regional IST. The "Under One Roof" Kit began as a radio course. Visiting experts from family relations, mental health and related fields were invited to lead each session. Dialogue with students was provided utilizing a type of "open mike" format. Each session was recorded, and the tapes became the core materials for the Home Study Kit.

The Calligraphy kit is a practical skill oriented package. It integrates available commercial materials with narrative instructions to provide a unique, easy to follow package for students. The kit materials can be reproduced for less than $25.00 and can be re-used many times. The IST has also analyzed the process of kit management and produced a complete summary of the necessary administrative procedures and record keeping designs.

Student reaction to the kits has been very positive and their production and re-production appears to be cost efficient. Whether or not we can, in a systematic and regular program, continue to develop new kits is open to future debate and dependent to a large extent on staff resources.

Community Service and Outreach: Community service is both a College responsibility and an effective tool for outreach and public relations. Two separate IST efforts were directed toward this service area. The intent was to research, plan, implement, and evaluate a community event, taking special note of the development process itself and evaluating the impact on the community.

"Speaking of Energy" was an all day community forum and workshop on a topic of current concern. The event itself was exceptionally well designed with mini workshops, panel discussions, lectures and demonstrations covering solar, hydro-electric, wind, wood, and other energy systems as well as electric power and food production. In the long run, the main value to the College may be the process used for planning and implementing the program. Flow charts were developed similar to the industrial model where you begin with all the necessary outcomes as starting points. You then work backwards to establish

what materials, people and work are necessary on a particular date in the sequence. This provides a series of benchmarks used to ensure that everything gets done on time. Everyone involved agreed that the experience was an excellent training device for staff or interns, and that it demonstrated a workable model for planning a community event.

Another IST developed a series of free community workshops aimed at outreach to rural students who are often reluctant to engage in formal learning experiences. A cross-sectional mixture of workshop topics was developed to attract diverse student participation. Citizens Band Radio, a three part Gardening Series, CPR, and an Ecology/Nature Walk provided interesting, "something for everyone" subject matter. The process involved uniting several areas of expertise into a consortium-like effort for subject development, advertising strategies, space allocation and workshop implementation. As a result, a healthy and thriving communication system developed between all concerned. Interestingly, almost all of the student participants were new to the College and few possessed any prior awareness of CCV or its services. Clearly, this effort provides another good model for accomplishing outreach through a community service event.

Consolidation and Responsive Education

It is evident by now that much was accomplished in the way of new procedures, materials and understandings. "How can we integrate all of our educational development efforts into a coherent whole?" and "How can we consolidate all the new information and understandings into usable forms for staff, students and instructors?" were challenging questions still confronting us. An earlier mentioned report (Forum Report, Exhibit A) produced by a campus faculty chaired committee

established at the IST Forum, gave us a further understanding and clarification of the APIE/Self-reliance paradigm. The report described the concepts both diagramatically and narratively. It also showed how some of the above described achievements related to the paradigm. The report recommended continued dialogue around the self-reliance issue and the collection and dissemination of work accomplished. Concomitantly, the College President was strongly urging that the integration and consolidation questions be answered through a merging of the ISTs and the Individualized Education Task Force (IETF) into a Responsive Education Project (REP).

We now had a conceptual framework showing how our developmental achievements related to the four stages of development: assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation. The IETF had developed a sound matrix approach showing how each of our five delivery models related to those above mentioned APIE stages (See Forum Report p.3). The remaining tasks were to describe the staff functions, skills, and roles necessary to implement the model, and develop a way to package and disseminate the tested, support procedures and materials. The first step was to gather all the materials and procedures developed at the regions, combine these with outside resources collected in the Central Office, and group everything within the APIE categories.

Retreat: A two day Forum retreat was then planned and held at Johnson State College. The goal was to refine this information and find ways to express important learnings in concrete and useful ways. The collected material was shared at the retreat and groups were formed to provide rationales for each of the APIE stages and to envision ways to integrate

the materials, the APIE stages, and the five delivery models (classroom, independent study, work experience, clusters, and experiential learning). Each group deliberated over these tasks, suggested alternative solutions, made recommendations for training, and developed a follow-up process.

Three Products: A follow-up committee process was then implemented. Three committees were established comprised of central office, regional, intern and faculty membership. They continued the work of the retreat by organizing all the information around three products:

1. For Students: Student Orientation and Progress Portfolio
2. For Teachers: A revised and improved Instructor Handbook
3. For Staff: A Program Development and Delivery Manual.

We hoped that the three projects, taken as a unit and as a package of materials would:

- consolidate the results and demonstrate the interrelatedness of many of the recent developmental efforts of the College, and convert them into usable formats for students, teachers, and staff;
- supplement the existing materials and procedures for the contracting and Local Review Committee process;
- provide support materials for orientation and staff development activities;
- allow flexibility for the continual revision, addition and renewal of materials;
- provide narrative and pictoral explanations of the APIE/Self-reliance concept;
- provide good materials for internal and external dissemination.

In addition, we felt that these materials would be even more significant in a college without a campus. The handbooks, containing carefully prepared and attractively designed materials, express concretely both the "authenticity" of the College and the importance we place on our students, teachers, and staff. Initial student reaction to the Portfolio and teacher reaction to the Handbook have confirmed this expectation.

Once the three concepts were agreed upon, subcommittees were established to work on the individual pieces. Basically, their job was to collect, revise and refine materials; interview regional staff, design formats, and develop training strategies. This process proved to be unexpectedly herculean. Drafts had to be further developed, revised and refined by Learning Services staff. Hampered by staff turnover and immersed in the reality of our other responsibilities, the ambitiousness of our original timeline bacame abundantly clear.

Although the experience was time consuming and at times painfully difficult, we all learned from the process.

The following is a brief discussion of the materials and some of the training activities:

Student Progress Portfolio: This book describes both diagramatically and through narrative, the concepts of our APIE approach to learning. Following this, the portfolio is divided into five sections; four corresponding to the APIE stages and one to be used as a student record. In essence, it is a complete orientation package, a workbook, and a journal for potential and enrolled degree students. Provided are references to learning style and developmental skills assessment inventories mentioned earlier. The assessment section begins with

exercises and culminates in a profile designed to help students make informed choices about filling their educational needs. Programs that the College offers such as the five delivery models, degree and pre-degree courses and the summer residency program are described in the planning section. The Implementation section assists with the process of negotiating objectives and with actual procedures for using the above mentioned programs. The Evaluation section provides rationales, descriptions, and exercises for helping students make good use of our competence based evaluation system.

Instructor Handbook: Earlier in this report, a teacher handbook "Wampum" was mentioned. It was always our intention to revise, improve and update this early effort. Reaction to the handbook from teachers and staff, coupled with a teacher and staff needs assessment completed in two regions formed the basis for more revision. In general terms, the latest handbook includes additional information, allows for more flexibility, is a little more restrained, and comes in a loose-leaf binder. The manual takes the teacher from a background and preparation section, to first night of class, negotiation of objectives, developing teaching strategies, through the evaluation process. It is meant to be used in stages as the teacher progresses through the span of a term. The body of the book presents the essentials for teachers as they work with students and with the competence-based system of objectives and narrative evaluations. In addition, each section has a pocket page for such things as regional information, helpful exercises, teaching tools and tips, and more in-depth information on adult learners, teaching strategies, and other subjects.

The Staff Manual: The Staff Manual idea grew out of a need to define and describe both generically and in terms of our delivery system the functions of APIE. It also provides a method for indexing and referencing all available resources and materials needed for the actual "doing" of each of these functions. It is a ready reference for experienced staff and an orientation package for new staff. In still another sense, the manual is a job description for those staff carrying out the learning support functions.

It outlines functions, short descriptions of procedures, and it references available resources to each function. The manual describes APIE functions for the following areas:

- Curriculum Development and Instructional Support
- Degree Process and Student Support
- Professional Development and Other Responsibilities

Also included is an annotated bibliography of relevant publications and materials.

The design flexibility of the three manuals allows administrative staff to use the materials in a variety of ways. For example individual pieces can be removed and used to meet the needs of a particular student or teacher. Student A may only need help with goal setting. The Inventory of Goals can be removed from the Student Portfolio and used to help that student. A teacher, confronted with a problem student, might be given the "Difficult Student" part of the Instructor Handbook to supplement a consultation with counseling or administrative staff. A teacher workshop on the topic of objective setting can use appropriate handbook materials as back ups for discussion.

Although time has not yet allowed for a great deal of evaluative information from students and teachers, what we have received has been

encouraging. The Portfolio seems especially effective at helping students better understand CCV, its philosophy and available options. Students in the early decision making stages find most of the assessment exercises helpful. Already, we are getting clues that future revision may need to include more "how to" exercises for helping students define their knowledge and skills and analyze future needs.

Teacher receptivity to the Instructor Handbook seems high. When presented to them in small groups as part of orientation, initial response has been enthusiastic. Information on "How The System Works," "The First Session," "Negotiating Objectives," and "The Difficult Student" seem to be especially good discussion starters.

We are now in the process of developing a questionnaire which is intended to solicit more in-depth evaluation information from instructors.

The Staff Manual is the last to be completed. In the process of development, it has already been revised several times. Capturing the essence of what it is we do can be difficult. Each region, naturally, has its own slightly different way of performing the necessary functions. Although a source of much vitality, richness, and strength, this variety complicates descriptive efforts. We do hope that the manual will help to show that common themes, assumptions, goals and functions can combine to provide a consistent framework for understanding our system.

The Staff Manual will provide immediate access to almost all of the available resources produced over the past three years. It is, in a sense, an index to resources. The resources are grouped into common categories, placed in folders, and housed in a resource file for each region. For example, a staff member preparing for a needs assessment can find the task described, and all the available resources indexed in the manual.

Training and Staff Development: As previously mentioned, the three paper products consolidate our individual achievements into formats allowing for their better utilization and wider distribution. Integral to the development of these materials were several levels of staff development and training activities such as:

1. The process of planning, developing and testing regionally and individually produced materials and procedures which promotes increased understanding and skill within a particular focus. The added resources of the IST program has allowed staff to research, do needs assessment, write, try out, and evaluate projects. The skills and knowledge gained as ideas and issues are wrestled with and discussed are certainly transportable to other necessary projects.
2. The involvement of Regional, IST, and Learning Services people on committees formed to further develop and integrate the information into new formats for college-wide use with the processes of review, integration, synthesis and editing, proved to be a growth experience for everyone involved. These skills were in addition to the gaining of increased familiarity with the material itself.
3. The practice of regionally held meetings for discussion of and training in the use of the final products refines one step further both staff knowledge of and skill with the materials. These meetings allow Learning Services staff and committee representatives to meet with regional staff to plan procedures for the application of the materials in the field. Because of the differing attributes and needs of each region, the procedures used vary from place to place.

In terms of evaluation and further development, this should allow the effectiveness of the materials to be judged in terms of their application in different settings and with various audiences.

4. The developed materials and procedures are designed to be organic. They can easily be modified, up-dated, and supplemented. The continuing implementation and testing with students, teachers, and staff is itself a developmental process. We expect to increase our understanding of the materials and of the concepts involved as we make improvements and develop new procedures.

The project had evolved to a more integrated response to our material and training needs, while attacking our learner assessment, teacher effectiveness problems. One of the great advantages to this design is that it gives us a framework and a conceptual base that molds together our achievements and makes provision for future improvements.

It should be remembered that the training activities mentioned were in addition to other staff development events such as the full length adult development course, a statistics and research course, other workshops offered by the participating campuses, and the hosting of outside "experts" like Rick Meeth and Roger Garrison.

THE CONSORTIUM

It is self evident that the achievements discussed above were in part the result of the collaborative arrangement. The interns and other additional resources made it all possible.

Basically, there were two aspects to the consortium effort; the provision of graduate interns to supplement our regional teams; and the inter-institutional collaboration at faculty and administrative levels.

The Intern Program

To say that the infusion of graduate interns into our regional staffing efforts had important results would be a gross understatement. The morale boost of fresh ideas and perspectives, the joys of helping new people learn new things, and the resultant periodic, and highly valued "release time" for staff to work on special projects or participate in professional development activities, were significant benefits to the College staff and programs.

Staff Reaction: To capture anywhere near the full flavor of staff reaction to the intern program, it is necessary to directly quote some of their comments:

> *Interns were able to improve service to instructors, students and staff; as students themselves they were able to respond to individual problems from this perspective.*
>
> *Our interns regularly brought ideas back from their university graduate education courses and provided the staff the stimulation of these new ideas. In addition, as "outsiders" interns were able to step back from the daily tasks and ask important questions; they added a breadth of perspective and a fresh approach to problems on which we had become stale.*

The orientation of each new intern not only provided that intern with a useful new paradigm, but also provided for staff a new opportunity to develop our own understanding and appreciation of APIE. The support for the paradigm on the part of the intern depended in great part on the maturity and commitment of the individual.

In most ways this system appears to have been an ideal training site. The system is designed to allow individuals the opportunity to pursue knowledge and skills that are of personal interest and importance. Interns therefore identified their own goals, planned their time to meet those goals, and were given the opportunity to implement and evaluate their programs.

How meaningful the experiential component was to the intern's academic program was in great part determined by each individuals goals. However, interns were able to take over responsibility for those areas of curriculum development which seemed to fit best those individual goals.

The program provided the opportunity to share our community-based, competency-based institution with interested students. In return, we were rewarded with the fresh perceptions of interested, informed individuals who yet remained to some extent by-standers. While there were times when it felt as though the amount of time required for orientation for some interns was excessive, other interns almost seemed to intuit what CCV was all about.

The interns were excellent, an invaluable help in enabling the regional staff to move forward in the development of systems/procedures as well as increased contact with constituencies.

Our intern became sort of an educational philosopher. He kept us from "forgetting" education in the midst of administration.

The program improved service to CCV's instructors and students markedly. Teachers, especially, now feel they have a staff person to whom issues and problems can be related.

It was also a goal of the project to provide training sites for the development of skills and knowledge related to a new and emerging job role. The team activities listed earlier in the report leave little doubt about the rich atmosphere for skill and knowledge development. Interns also were able to design and produce an Intern Orientation Handbook, (Exhibit G) and on two occasions organized, coordinated,

facilitated and evaluated their own meetings.

Intern Reaction: Written reports and evaluations from interns indicate a high level of satisfaction with the IST program as a field experience. In fact, typical responses were; "excellent," "tops," "outstanding," and "exceptionally good." Especially valued was the flexibility of the program and the myriad opportunities to use present talents and develop new ones. In general, interns rated their work as extremely interesting, the work load as moderate to heavy, and the tasks as fairly difficult. Some found that they were able to apply CCV's competence based approach to their graduate studies. It provided a new way for them to think about and describe their learning. Others found that the experience, combined with their studies, helped them to discuss issues at a more meaningful level in their classes.

At least nine interns developed an interest in doing more or expanded graduate work. Many changed their career plans and almost all found that the experience increased their self-reliance significantly. A brief sampling of comments from interns provides additional prespectives:

> *Being an adult student, I found the concerns and atmosphere of CCV reasonable, productive, and exciting. I felt needed by the students and by the College. I felt myself in touch with active, imaginative, brilliant but practical people from whom I could learn and who were eager to learn from me. It was rewarding--very.*
>
> *The most rewarding aspect was a significant growth on my part- as a person, developing my strengths, increased self-reliance, and re-assessment of some of my goals.*
>
> *I made good friends and had the opportunity to work with several top-notch people; developed a personal philosophy of education, both content and delivery, had the satisfaction of helping people get immersed in a satisfying educational experience.*

Without a doubt, the most rewarding experience was working with various learners and seeing many of them became excited, self-directed learners. The "personal" atmosphere is the College's strength and people responded accordingly. By all means, never loose that appeal.

There were four especially meaningful aspects:

1. *The opportunity to assume a position of responsibility in working with adults committed to learning;*
2. *Working with a staff where mutual trust and respect is valued by all;*
3. *Opportunity to achieve competence in skills such as interviewing, planning, speaking before groups, etc.;*
4. *Being able to choose projects that I wanted to pursue.*

The program offered me an opportunity to become competent in many skills at many levels and in a thoroughly modern (my experience in industry tells me) vein of cost/benefit planning and implementation. B. Fuller's "Doing More With Less" was never so well illustrated.

It is clear that the experience for interns was both productive and rewarding. To do justice to the actual skills developed would take many pages. However, two interns give brief summaries that capture the essence of the competence gained:

I have gained better counseling skills as a result of my work during my internship. I am able to work effectively with students in a one-to-one setting, as well as in a group setting. I am better able to listen and reflect back in a conversation as well as be directive and supportive. I have gained skills in interviewing and have been able to get a "sense" of how productive I feel an instructor will be. I am able to come into a group, as an outsider, and provide leadership and direction. I also have skills in facilitating necessary work. I am able to be supervised, however, I still feel that I need to work on the difference between accepting criticism of my work and of myself.

I feel that I can lend good support and can take out the productive and effective parts of a task, and emphasize these parts. I can use this skill in addressing others constructively. Basically I view this as mastering the art of tact.

I have also been able to make clear, rational decisions based on data presented to me and I can do this in an orderly, logical fashion.

and,

There have been many positive outcomes as a result of my experience at CCV. My concept of education has broadened

considerably and has given me a renewed hope and determination to stay in this field. My awareness of what the word community means and the importance of a sense of community in my life has increased. Besides the overall knowledge I have gained, I have identified several personal strengths that have helped me clarify the direction I want to take in terms of future employment. I have always had a genuine concern for people and feel real good about my interpersonal skills. I like personal contact with people and in the last year I have become even more aware of some of my skills and personal qualities that encourage and enhance good communication. I have realized the importance of not operating out of an emotional base; but rather, it is important to be in touch with one's own feelings and still be objective in the conversation. I feel I have a non judgemental attitude, patience, and sensitivity which creates a non-threatening atmosphere that allows for freedom and growth. I have learned to listen well and am improving my ability to really "hear" the underlying message (if any) when a person is expressing his or her feelings or thoughts. I usually know when to clarify, be decisive and when to wrap up a session.

In addition to considerable growth on my part in interpersonal relationships, I have seen the development of some administrative skills. Given a specific task, I am good at planning, organizing, implementing and following through in a logical and orderly fashion. It is important to me that things are well thought out and as a result, I find myself being able to foresee problems that might arise so I can take preventative steps then rather than wait until something goes wrong. Also, I have always been very reliable in terms of my commitments with people.

One fine testimonial to the success of the intern program is the fact that no fewer than six interns have been hired by the College as either full or part-time staff members. Once trained, interns provide a ready resource pool to draw on when staff shortages or turnover occur.

Problems: To be sure, there were problems that interns and others experienced. Probably the most common difficulty was the start up process. Orientation to CCV is not easy. It involves trying to understand a philosophy, mission, and delivery system that are

usually foreign to prior experience; while simultaneously being immersed in a new setting, with new people. Staff inexperience with supervisory roles exacerbated this problem early in the project. As we got better at orienting interns and arranging tasks that were more amenable to their individual needs, the problems diminished. However, self-starting, more self-reliant interns found the going much easier than those needing more direction.

A few interns reported difficulties with administrative red tape, some complained of occasional feelings of isolation from peers and campus community, and at least two struggled through serious financial shortages. Even these problems, however were exceptions rather than regular occurances. To quote one intern: "I suppose the least rewarding aspect was the fact that my association with the project had to end. The experience has had a profound effect on my professional aspirations."

Faculty and Administrative Collaboration

The consortium effort also included campus faculty serving as liaisons to the regional teams, mentors for helping interns integrate academic and experiential learning, and as links to campus resources. Cooperation between institutions at administrative levels was also part of the design.

The project accomplished its goals in this area to a very mixed degree. We experienced for the first time a great deal of inter-institutional activity. Unique arrangements were made among campus colleges and between them and CCV. In some cases, campus faculty involvement with the project and interns was intimate. Campus programs and resources were opened up to CCV staff, and faculty provided consultation and development opportunities for CCV instructors

and staff. Graduate interns from one college were even on occasion served and supported by the faculty and administration of another campus.

Barriers: However, if the project had its achilles heal, it was probably the collaboration at administrative and faculty levels. Enthusiastic cooperation was sporadic and meaningful interaction outside of the intern program often came with painful difficulty. The collaborative idea was imaginative and progressive but it was probably an idea whose time had not quite come. In retrospect, the reasons for that are now becoming clear. Although the project proposal described benefits both to CCV and to the campuses, some participants never accepted the arrangement as a quid pro quo. Some understood the advantages to the interns and to CCV but felt that the rest was perfunctory.

It could be argued that back in 1975, CCV had a tendency to be almost snobbish about its position on the "cutting edge" of innovation in higher education. Based on much national publicity, recognition, and local successes, we sometimes assumed that the College had the answers that everybody else eagerly wanted to learn. If indeed this attitude prevailed, it is not hard to see why some seasoned, more traditional educators were less than enthusiastic about being "enlightened" by young, upstart, "Johnny come latelys."

At the same time, lean funding of all of the state colleges was creating an atmosphere of competition between institutions and especially between the campuses and CCV. Many State College faculty considered CCV to be a drain on a limited money pool.

As you know, CCV, for economical and philosophical reasons, exclusively hires part-time community practitioners to carry out instructional programs. The feeling, among many state college faculty, seemed to be that this practice was a compromise to their security and of questionable legitimacy. This created another dynamic affecting our ability to cooperate. Ironically, the project was asking campus faculty to help CCV improve instruction in an organization seen by some of their colleagues as a threat to their own welfare. To be sure, some campus faculty participants were put in a difficult middle position between these opposing forces.

The size and focus of at least three of the participating graduate programs was another complicating factor. Traditionally, these programs have served students interested primarily in elementary and secondary education. Also, many of their students combine graduate study with job responsibilities and therefore are not looking for internships. As a result, it was often difficult to recruit interns and make a meaningful articulation between graduate program and internship role. Nevertheless, high quality, motivated interns were eventually recruited and appropriate linkages were made.

Progress: It is easy to say now that we all should have tried harder to make this aspect of the consortium work better. However, like fluid in a pipeline, energy flows where there is the least resistance. And, the fact is that significant progress and accomplishments were made. The program and intern achievements could not have happened without high quality assists from campus administrators and faculty.

The campuses took much of the responsibility for the recruitment,

selection, and academic supervision of interns. Often this included extensive advertising and interviewing of prospective candidates. They also offered on-going consultation, advice and support, and participated in Forum and other meetings.

Beyond that there were many other collaborative activities, some of which are briefly discussed here:

- Access to campus resources and collaboration with campus administration provided CCV with the opportunity to run two full length courses. These courses, available without cost to staff and interns, included a comprehensive experience with adult growth and development theory and a statistics and research in education course. CCV staff and interns were also invited to attend campus sponsored weekend workshops and classes. These offerings were also made available free of charge.
- On occasion, campus faculty were called on to give workshops or presentations to CCV instructors and staff. For example, a campus faculty member ran an orientation session for CCV instructors on adult learner needs.
- Three times, campus faculty represented the project at meetings or conferences held at the national level.
- One regional IST collaborated with the campus administration to jointly sponsor education courses in the community. The courses were individualized to meet both lower and upper division needs. Students could choose either CCV recognition or State College credit.
- A campus faculty member chaired an important Forum established Committee. This involved interviewing staff, collecting data,

and assisting with preparation of the aforementioned report.

- Consorting with a campus college, CCV was invited to establish a cooperative information center in a community outside of CCV's normal service area.
- A regional IST and a campus college collaborated to do a needs assessment procedure with local businesses and industries.
- Cooperative arrangements between institutions allowed graduate interns from one College to be supervised and supported by another campus. These arrangements helped to overcome occasional intern shortages, and allowed a liaison between the intern and the nearest or most appropriate faculty.

Network: The inter-institutional collaboration at the Integrated Service Team and Forum levels was originally seen as a first step in the development of a statewide network for serving adult learner needs. Several other cooperative activities have indeed been implemented partially as a result of the atmosphere created by the project.

Four significant developments were the establishment of a joint outreach committee between the Vermont State Colleges and the University of Vermont; the development of a field-based consortium by the two systems in northwestern Vermont; the publication of a statewide outreach course list, and the inauguration of an inter-institutional/cooperative External Baccalaureate Program. The outreach committee is the umbrella under which the other activities operate. The ultimate goal is to facilitate adult learner access to higher education in Vermont through co-planning and co-implementation activities. The

network seeds have been planted but for them to properly grow, there is substantial work to be done.

The reduced availability of tax dollars to support higher education in Vermont, has created an interesting dynamic. It has increased the need for more statewide planning, better articulation between programs and less duplication of effort among institutions. And yet, it has forced a situation where more people are scrambling for less money, which obviously raises the level of competition among institutions and makes collaboration more difficult. Paradoxically, the same forces that make cooperation more essential, also are serving to make it more difficult.

At least now, we have under our belts more experience. We will be less likely in the future to underestimate the complexities and the forces at work. And, hopefully, we will be more skillful at understanding and accomodating diverse perceptions and needs.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Impacts

The three year Integrated Service Team Project and its evolution into the Responsive Education Project allowed CCV to transcend a "survival" and "maintenance" posture in our academic programs. It has allowed us to complete tasks that had long been identified as necessary and important but which were not receiving much attention because of the more immediate everyday demands placed on a "bare bones" staff.

Products: The materials and procedures produced have at least partially filled the vacuum that in the past often created the need for questions like; "Do we have or know about anything for helping teachers assess students' needs as they negotiate objectives?" and "What do they do in the Southeast Region to assess needs?" We now have at least the foundation, the core materials and ideas to build on.

Wrestling with the mandates of the proposal forced us to go beyond the parameters of the teacher-student relationship. We were able to strengthen the whole range of APIE functions together. We have been able to test ideas, reflect on the results, and transform workable models into convenient and usable materials. From community needs and learner assessment, through the evaluation process, we have both developed and described what it is we do and what we need in order to do it.

Understandings: We came to an increased understanding of the relationship between the teaching/learning process and the systems

that support it. The importance of a strong support staff and effective resources in a program with part-time students and teachers has been clarified and confirmed.

We are also in a position where we better understand our educational philosophy and better see the inter-relatedness and inter-dependencies among our supporting materials and procedures. We have a sound framework which helps us to make sense out of an almost smorgasbord like mixture of ideas and procedures that even to ourselves often seemed incongruous.

Maturation: The increased activity around the discussion of issues and the development of procedures and materials has propelled the College forward in its own development. Our present priorities are emerging to a great extent from the evolution of the IST program.

Early in the project there was a strong need for improved materials, refined procedures, and for increased articulation between what we do and what we say we believe in. Although these concerns are and should still be with us, we are much more ready to deal with the issues of criteria, standard setting, and college-wide consistency. Just as it is difficult for people to self-actualize while hungry, it was difficult for CCV to deal with quality control and consistency needs when we were lacking common understandings and good tools.

In setting our goals and making our academic plans for the coming year, we soon realized that the nature of what we now know we have to do is a direct result of the growth that has taken place in our thinking and in our methods over the past three years. It seems to us that the opportunity for increased dialogue and activity made possible through

additional IST resources was of a major importance. The accelerated rate of growth resulting, although ancillary in nature, was of major significance. We are now in a better position to see where consistency is needed and where diversity strengthens. People seem more ready to accept the concept of standardizing some things in order to insure the uniqueness of others. We believe that our developmental efforts over the last three years have served as catalysts to this evolutionary and maturation process.

We have developed a deep appreciation for the value of graduate interns as adjunct staff and we now know how to make the experience rewarding for them and productive for us. At the same time, we are more sophisticated about the difficulties and complexities of collaborative efforts. As future cooperative arrangements are developed, as they must be, we will have done our needs assessment. We have learned to be more systematic in our planning and more evaluative in our thinking. This should help us to be less confounded by diverse perceptions and complex arrangements in the future.

Dissemination

There are obviously many lessons that we have learned and there is much that we would like to share. CCV is viewed, with some justification, as one of the few working models or examples of a system encompassing most of the innovative concepts in higher education today. The College serves non-traditional adult students with a campus-free, community based approach to delivery and part-time local practitioners provide almost all of the instruction for its competence based academic and service programs.

A Model: Over the past three years, CCV has developed and refined this model to the point where we might help others get a head start on their efforts. They might choose to use either some or all of the concepts involved. We might, for example, use the Staff Manual to define and describe for others some of the necessary functions, procedures, resources and skills needed to support a community based delivery system. This information, in essence, defines that "new job role" mentioned in the original proposal.

Topics: Of course, any institution planning to serve adult students with innovative programs will have to set its own objectives, and from those develop the most appropriate functions, activities, and materials. The actual approach used will have to account for both the unique needs and constraints of the College and of the students served. However, based on what we now know and can do, we might offer help with the following topics:

- The development of and applications for materials handbooks, manuals, workbooks, etc. used to support part-time adult students and community instructors. Our Instructor Handbook, Student Portfolio and Staff Manual can serve as prototypes to share with others.
- The functions, procedures, activities, skills and roles necessary for the implementation and support of a community based learning network.
- The effective use of graduate interns to supplement regular staff for developing and administering programs for adult learners or part-time instructors.

- The possibilities and constraints involved with the orientation and training of part-time instructors and administrative support staff.
- Alternative approaches to learner assessment as the first stage of the teaching/learning process for adults and techniques for the combined setting of learning objectives by students and instructors.
- The nuances and complexities of developing cooperative arrangements at faculty and administrative levels, as well as many of the potential benefits.

Strategy: Workshops, conferences, publications, consulting, and material distribution are common forms of dissemination strategies. Without full awareness of what others might need, it is difficult to estimate which approach, combination of approaches, or new variation would be most effective.

A fantasy model would have CCV become a training center for professionals or students interested in learning how to create community based systems for serving adult learners. Year long internships similar to the IST model could provide a total immersion experience in a community based program. Graduate students, professionals, even representatives from developing countries, could develop a basic set of knowledges and skills that could be later refined for adaptation to other settings and situations.

With somewhat less ambition, and if there are needs for what we have to offer, we hope that the right strategies will emerge from

those needs. We hope that the Kellogg Foundation with its resources, its Use of Innovations Project, can help with this process.

As an interesting footnote CCV has already had several requests for both the Student Portfolio and the Instructor Handbook. These requests come from various parts of the country and before any effort has been made to let people know they exist.

All of the project participants, CCV staff, instructors, and students wish to join in a thanks to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for making this unique experience possible.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Brattleboro/Antioch Team

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Project Participants Continued

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Project Participants Continued

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Consultant

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Others Joining Project During Responsive Education Phase

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Kathi Rouselle	CCV/NEK	Coordinator/Counselor
Mary Reed	CCV/SE	Counselor
Clo Pitkin	CCV/CV	Counselor
Mary Wade	CCV/CO	Counseling Coordinator

Project Participants Continued

Other Supervisory

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Marjory Walker	CCV/CV	Regional Director
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Ken Hood	CCV/CO	Central Office Director
Nancy Wylie	CCV/CO	Acting President/Vice President, of Academic Affairs
Myrna Miller	CCV/CO	Academic Dean
Peter Smith	CCV/CO	President
George Bilicic	CCV/CO	President

* Designates interns served through cooperative arrangements between campus colleges.

LIST OF EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT A	A Kellogg IST Report on the Development of CCV's Approach to Learning (Forum Report)
EXHIBIT B	Assessment of Learning: A Report to CCV Staff Involved in the Integrated Service Team and Individualized Education Task Force Projects
EXHIBIT C	Community Needs Assessment in Education and Social Services: A Needs Study For The Community College of Vermont
EXHIBIT D	Student Progress Portfolio
EXHIBIT E	Instructor Handbook
EXHIBIT F	Staff Manual
EXHIBIT G	Intern Orientation Handbook

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